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ABSTRACT

The last of five booklets on specific sports instruction in Special Olympics presents information on teaching cross country skiing to mentally retarded persons. The approach uses goals, short term objectives, task analyzed activities, assessments and teaching suggestions for individualizing and integrating the sports skills instruction with other curriculum areas. Instruction is designed to be given by volunteers. Initial sections discuss hints for being a good teacher, organizational suggestions, and information on clothing, equipment and a dryland training program. A skills assessment determines the student's present functioning level. The following specific skills are addressed: ready position, recovery, forward walking, star turns, climbing, straight run, wedge, turns, diagonal stride, and double poling. Sections on rules and safety and racing conclude the guide. (CL)

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SPECIAL OLYMPICS

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Sports Skills
Instructional Program

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Photo of Eunice Kennedy Shriver by Ken Regan.

In the Special Olympics program, coaches play a unique and indispensable role. It is they who impart to Special Olympians the sports skill and competitive spirit that define the true athlete.

But, they are far more than teachers. They are role models in the building of character; they assist in the development of the whole person. They give Special Olympians the most immediate awareness of their own worth, their ability, their courage, their capacity to grow and improve.

To be a coach in Special Olympics demands qualities of mind and spirit that transcend knowledge of specific games or events. But the foundation of good coaching is still competence and solid grounding in the fundamentals. Therefore, I cannot emphasize enough that sound training of coaches and athletes alike is the basis for everything we do in Special Olympics.

This Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Program was developed and tested by coaches, teachers and parents—it is written and illustrated so that coaches at every level of experience can improve their skills in working with Special Olympians.

Followed carefully and consistently, the Sports Skill Instructional Program will raise the level of all Special Olympics coaches and give to Special Olympians and their families the gift of pride and accomplishment that comes with doing something well.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver

Eunice Kennedy Shriver

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INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM

The Sports Skills Instructional Program is designed for mentally retarded persons who may exhibit any number of associated learning impairments. The program can be administered by the regular physical education teacher, the adapted physical education specialist, the special education teacher, a recreation leader or therapeutic recreation specialist. In addition, the Special Olympics coach, parent and volunteer will find the Sports Skills Instructional Program extremely helpful in preparing Special Olympians for sports skills competition. The Sports Skills Instructional Program is based on the premise that people entering the program have mastered the primary (motor) and perceptual motor skills. They must also possess a sufficient level of fitness to enable them to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for learning a particular sport skill.

In November of 1975 a legislative landmark, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142), was signed into law. The law guarantees all children the right to a free appropriate public education. As defined in section 121.24 of the law, the term "special education" means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child, including classroom instruction, *instruction in physical education*, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions. The importance of physical education in the total education of a handicapped child is evident in that physical education is the only subject area specifically addressed in the definition of special education. The Sports Skills Instructional Program has been designed to meet and comply with the requirements of Public Law 94-142.

This Instructional Program utilizes goals, short term objectives, task analyzed activities, assessments and teaching suggestions for individualizing and integrating sports skills instructions into other subject areas of the student's curriculum. Each sport has been task analyzed by physical educators and recreators who have had previous success in teaching that particular sport to mentally retarded individuals.

Field Testing

During 1979-1981, the Sports Skills Instructional Program was field-tested among public and private schools, residential centers, activity centers and recreational agencies. Over 100 teachers and 2000 students were utilized in the test effort in the states of Arizona, California, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Support for the program was justified by positive reaction and feedback from recreation, physical and special education professionals throughout the country. Collection and analysis of field test data revealed that the Sports Skills Instructional Program provided a systematic instructional process resulting in the development and improvement of sports skills among mentally retarded individuals.

Each sports skill unit complies with the requirements and regulations of Public Law 94-142 and can be written into the student's individualized education program.

Format of Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Program

The format of each Special Olympics sports skills instructional unit is:

- **Overview**—definition of activity, instruction/rules, equipment/supplies, relevance/appropriateness to student, ease of adaptation, and prerequisite skills.
- **Long Term Goal**—a statement of expected student behavior after the learning experience.
- **Short Term Objectives**—statements of specific student behaviors relative to the goal statement. Generally, the criteria for acceptable performance has been purposely omitted from the behavioral objective. In order to individualize teaching, the teacher/recreator of the sports skill unit should realistically determine the criteria based on the:
  (1) present ability of the student.
  (2) potential ability of the student.
  (3) behavioral limitations of the student.
  (4) behavioral limitations of the environment.
- **Modifications and Adaptations**—equipment, sport rules, and playing area to ensure successful participation by the student.
- **Sports Skill Assessment**—criterion referenced test to determine the student's present level of functioning within a specific sport or skill. Pre-tests and post-tests related to teaching skill, skill sequence and tasks.
- **Teaching Skill**—identifies the skill to be learned.
- **Skill Sequence**—sequenced behavior in which the learner must engage in order to to demonstrate acquisition of the skill or knowledge described in the objective. Again, the teacher/recreator should determine the criteria for acceptable performance.
- **Task Analysis**—further analysis of skill into detailed steps which the student must master in order to demonstrate proficiency in that skill.
- **Teaching Suggestions**—suggestions of methods and materials to foster successful mastery of the skill by the student.
- **Infusion Chart**—sports skill in relation to general academic areas such as social studies, reading/language, home economics, arts, physical education, science, math, health, and industrial arts.
- **Student Skill Chart**—chart to mark the student's sports skill performance throughout the program.
- **Terminology and Resources**—glossary of terms, bibliography and resources (printed and audio-visual materials.)

ORGANIZATION OF TRAINING SESSION

Every Special Olympics program needs professional guidance and supervision, even though most of the training and supervision can be and usually is handled by volunteers from many varied sources—teachers, parents, high school and college students, church organizations, civic groups, military organizations, etc. For example, volunteer coaches should be trained by professionals in physical education and sports.

The method and manner by which you conduct your program will in large part determine your success as a teacher/coach. While teaching, approach your students enthusiastically and present the day's lesson in an enjoyable manner. Remember, Special Olympians return the excitement and enthusiasm transmitted to them by you. There are a variety of things you can do as a planner and instructor to create a positive, acceptable human environment to support learning in a group.

READY TO START

You've attended a Special Olympics Training School and you're ready to teach your students. Two students have received cross country skiing instruction in the past year and the remaining four students are new to your class. In order to determine the skiing ability among your students, administer the Sports Skills Assessments—Level I. The test enables you as the instructor to assess the ability range of your class. High ability level students should be evaluated using the Sports Skills Assessment—Level II.

Once the tests have been administered, individualize each practice so every student works on the skill area in which he/she needs the most improvement. If a Special Olympian shows problems walking on the snow, review the basic steps in performing a forward shuffle as outlined in this guide. On the other hand, if an athlete scores well on the walking section, provide instruction in advanced walking techniques, such as the diagonal stride, or have the athlete practice a skill that he/she is not as efficient in. An alternative for a Special Olympian who excels in various sports skills is to use him/her as a coach.

Plan 5-10 minutes at the beginning of each class to warm up properly. Students should stretch and perform agility exercises as part of their warm up. Each class should offer 25-30 minutes of sports skills instruction. Mark each athlete's progress on the Skill Chart. Always come to the class prepared. Know what you are going to do and how you are going to do it. Allow for possible modifications or adaptations to the original plan as needed. Finish each class with a short tour or fun activity. At the end of the unit, review the Student Skill Charts to determine your students' improvement. End the class on a positive note by praising the good things you have seen and giving a group cheer.

HINTS TO BE A GOOD TEACHER

- RELAX. Attempt to learn the rhythm and style of your class the first day.
- Be flexible. Alter instruction to meet the need of a particular student or group.
- Set realistic goals for each student.
- Don't expect immediate results as far as skill learning—patience, patience and more patience.
- Always plan and understand lesson thoroughly.
- Stand and face students during instruction.
- Participate in activity with students. Stay active.
- Teach by indirection as well as direction; students are great imitators.
- Allow the student plenty of time to become familiar with the skill before teaching another skill.
- Be firm and maintain good discipline.
- Be quick to praise.
- Provide brief and clear instructions.
- Always point out the positive before correcting: "Mary, your strides are smooth, but let's try starting your kick earlier so . . . ."
- Use confidence builders. Always attempt to prevent a student from encountering repeated failures.

HINTS FOR ORGANIZING A GOOD CLASS

- Use the skiing area to your best advantage.
- Organize stations by ability. Color code ability groups (i.e., Green—Beginner; Blue—Rookie, etc.) No one should be standing around while you arrange things. Keep everyone busy!
- Keep students informed of changes in schedule or activities.
- Introduce students to one another and orient them to the instructional setting.
- Demonstrate the sport skill whenever and as frequently as possible.
- Keep the fun in fundamentals. use a game approach.
- Devote a part of each class period to group activity.
- If activity is going well, it is often useful to stop activity while interest is high.

SPORTS SKILLS INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM FOR MULTI-HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS

The Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Program applies to all Special Olympics participants including those who are multi-handicapped. Special Olympics has an objective of offering meaningful opportunities and competition to multi-handicapped individuals, regardless of the severity of their handicaps. Various adaptations and modifications of the Special Olympics Sports Skills Instructional Program should be made based upon the needs of the participants. See modifications/adaptations section of this guide.

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

The Cross Country Skiing unit is a guide for teaching cross country skiing through the beginner and intermediate levels. Skiing technique/skills, as well as safety, fitting of equipment and dryland practice, will comprise this unit.

It is very important that the instructor is aware of the student's physical capacities. It is essential to not push the student beyond his ability and to be aware of his/her point of exhaustion. When teaching, it is wise to always present new ideas early in the lesson while the student is fresh, but not to offer more material than he/she can comprehend at one time. When planning a cross country program, design the program to meet your environment. If in snow country, the students should receive as much on-snow instruction and experience as possible.On the other hand, if in a location where snow is minimal, dryland instruction can be used effectively. Dryland instruction will increase the student's confidence and ability prior to skiing on the trails. The basic skills of climbing, diagonal striding, double poling, and wedge, as well as recovery skills, can all be learned prior to ever stepping on snow.

Cross country skiing has boomed and has become a very popular form of winter recreation and competition for individuals of all ages and ability levels.

GOAL/OBJECTIVES/BENEFITS

1

LONG TERM GOAL

The student will acquire basic fundamental skills, appropriate social behavior and functional knowledge of the safety and rules of the trail to enable him/her to participate in cross country skiing.

2

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

1.0 Given demonstration and practice the student will execute dryland exercises in preparation for cross country skiing.

2.0 Given demonstration and practice, the student will always warm up before cross country skiing.

3.0 Given demonstration and practice, the student will successfully execute the necessary skills to participate in cross country skiing.

4.0 While cross country skiing, the student will always demonstrate courtesy and safety on the trails.

3

BENEFITS

- Cross country skiing allows the individual freedom to grow socially and provides experiences to stimulate communication.
- Cross country skiing promotes the ability to follow group or individual instruction.
- Cross country skiing offers the possibility to enjoy independent movement.
- Cross country skiing improves agility and coordination.
- Cross country skiing increases total fitness.
- Cross country skiing provides an opportunity for family and friends to pursue the sport as a unit.

CLOTHING

CLOTHING

Clothing and accessories should be combined to provide warmth and protection from moisture, wind, and sun. Several layers of clothing are better than one. Layering permits you to remove some protection or insulation, but never "all or none". The concept of venting is particularly important in cross-country skiing. By removing an article of clothing or opening (unzipping) a jacket, you can vent or regulate the body's temperature and perspiration rate. Covering or uncovering the head is the most effective vent of your body's "heating system". Remember, "proper fit" means clothing that doesn't restrict motion and circulation.

Underwear

The inside layer needs to be made of natural fiber. Natural fibers absorb body moisture. Most commercial long underwear is fine.

Socks

Wear one pair of nylon socks with a properly fitted wool outer sock. More than two pairs will adversely affect your boot fit. Socks without ribs are the most comfortable.

Turtleneck

A turtleneck shirt or sweater is the most practical ski shirt because it is snug at the neck and the wrist, which is good for maintaining body heat.

Sweaters

Body heat can be retained or allowed to escape by the type of sweater you choose. Less heat is lost by wearing tighter knits.

Pants/knickers

Wool pants and knickers are most popular. Cotton or corduroy fabrics will become wet and cold quickly. Pants are warmer than knickers, but can restrict motion. Competitors will usually choose polyester or combination cotton/nylon suits. Though suitable for racing they do not provide sufficient protection for back country skiing.

Jackets

Jackets should have pockets, (the more, the better) adjustable sleeve fasteners (you can add velcro strips), and should provide protection from the wind. Except for back country skiing, you will not need an insulated jacket. It is better to wear a sweater with a windbreaker.

Vests

Down- or polyester-filled vests provide warmth for the torso without restricting movement for the arms. A vest can be a good all-purpose outdoor clothing item.

Gloves

The hands are the first part of your body to get cold, and cold hands are not fun. Gloves or mittens specifically designed for skiing are essential. Mittens are warmer, but gloves are more versatile. Be sure the palms are reinforced and your fingers have room to move.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Show pictures of clothes which are appropriate for skiing.**
- **Using a flannel board and felt, cut-out articles of clothing and equipment, have student properly dress figure.**
- **Emphasize not to overdress. A lot of body heat is generated while cross country skiing.**
- **Point out the advantages and disadvantages in various types of clothes which can be worn. Emphasize selection of water resistant clothing.**
- **Discuss the importance of wearing properly fitted clothing, regulating body heat and allowing for proper ventilation.**
- **Discuss the layer principle and the types of clothes to be worn when skiing.**
- **Be aware of the cold factors that may lead to frostbite. Signs to watch for are white spots on cheeks, nose, fingers and toes. If signs appear, bring student indoors immediately for treatment. Instruct student to remove jacket, hat and mittens while in heated building.**

EQUIPMENT

Hats

Most body heat is lost from the head so hats should cover the head and ears. (They also keep hair dry when it is snowing). Styles are varied and are purely a matter of choice. Beware of long or dangling hats.

Goggles and Sunglasses

Visibility is of great importance and can make the difference between fun and misery. Sunglasses or goggles block the wind from your eyes, help cut the glare from the sun, and are a necessity for people who wear glasses or contact lenses. If buying goggles, check for lens distortion, top and bottom air vents, strap connection, and smooth fit to the head. Anti-fog or no-fog is nice.

Weather Cream

A weather cream should be used on your face to prevent windburn or sunburn.

Face

Cold and windy days can frostbite the chin, cheeks, and nose. Wear something that will protect your lower face, such as a short scarf, a jacket collar that will turn up, or roll your turtleneck over your lower face.

Boots

Be sure your footwear keeps your feet warm and dry before you get to the lodge. Tennis shoes and high heels are not practical as paths are usually wet and slippery.

EQUIPMENT

Ski Types

Light touring skis are very versatile whether used on or off the track. They are wider than racing skis; the additional width provides greater stability and good flotation in untracked snow. These skis are constructed for good durability and performance. They are an excellent choice for beginners and experts of all ages.

Sizing

Traditionally, the length of an adult ski is measured from the floor to the wrist or the palm of the hand when stretched above the head; young children's lengths are measured to their height. A shortened length for children affords easier control and mobility and less strain on undeveloped coordination and muscles.

More appropriately, the length of ski for *all beginners*, children and adults, should be measured to their height. The shortened length is beneficial for these reasons: 1) Like children, many older beginners may have undeveloped coordination and specific muscle control; 2) Control and mobility is increased; 3) The need for stability at high speeds (longer skis are usually more stable than short) is not a factor for beginners. When a skier's technique level progresses to an intermediate level or above, efficiency, speed, and more challenging terrain may dictate switching to longer skis.

Poles

The correct pole length is the measure from under the arm to the floor. Ideally, the pole straps should be adjustable, although not all children's models have this feature.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Display equipment used and have student name each.**
- **Display a variety of sports equipment and have the student select the equipment used for cross country skiing.**
- **Discuss the advantages of shorter skis. If the athlete is weak or has poor motor skills, a slightly shorter ski is recommended.**
- **Discuss proper safety when using poles.**

DRYLAND TRAINING PROGRAM

1.0 Given demonstration and practice the student will participate in a dryland skiing and conditioning program.

DRYLAND TRAINING PROGRAM

Why do we emphasize a dry land program? The first reason is *Safety*. Skiing is a strenuous sport which requires some extra conditioning. The second reason is because it is fun learning new skills and anticipating new activities. And finally, because skiing will be much easier to learn on snow if the movements and terms have been learned before.

READY POSITION

1. Develop the ability to perform a relaxed ski stance.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Place feet hip-width apart.
b. Position hands on knees.
c. Bend knees until kneecaps are over the toes.
d. Bounce up and down, pushing the knees forward.
e. Keep knees and ankles flexed.
f. Focus eyes ahead, keeping chin up.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Have athlete repeat the phrase as he/she performs command, "Feet apart", "Hands on Knees", and "Look Ahead". Have student do this until the words and motions are automatic.**
- **Movement of the head affects the whole body. Constantly emphasize, "Look Ahead" and/or "Keep Your Chin Up."**
- **Watching the feet is a big problem on and off the slopes. Try to stand in front of the athletes and have them look at you. Mirrors are good teaching aids or have student pick a spot on a wall and look at it while moving.**
- **Lean forward, lean back, and from side to side to determine the most stable position. Weight should be equally distributed on both feet.**
- **Stand behind student and place hands on his/her hips. Physically assist student bouncing up and down. Student's knee caps should be over toes and hips over the feet. Emphasize down-up-down movement in the knees and ankles.**
- **Be aware of the feet and the direction they are pointing. Think of the toes as being the tips of the skis and the heels as the tails of the skis.**

DRILLS

- **"You're in Trouble": When in trouble lower the body position as much as possible by bending the knees forward and keeping the hands on knees.**

As you are doing the other games say, "You're in Trouble" and have the athlete assume this position quickly—conditioning response as what to do when one is in trouble.

WEIGHT SHIFT AND CHANGE OF DIRECTION

WEIGHT SHIFT

1. Develop ability to shift weight correctly 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume READY position.
b. Shift weight to left foot by bending left knee more than right.
c. Step forward with right foot.
d. Shift weight to right foot by bending right knee more than left.
e. Bring left foot even with right and assume READY position.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Shifting your weight from one foot to the other while staying balanced in the READY position is important because it makes it possible to kick and glide on your skis, and to turn your skis.**
- **Be aware of the feet and the direction they are pointing. Look ahead.**

DRILLS

- Once you have shifted weight to one foot, pause long enough in that position to see that you are balanced on that foot before moving to the other foot.
- Have the student stand at the bottom of a set of stairs, facing the steps. Maintaining READY position, step up the stairs one step at a time.
- Jump (taking off from one foot and landing on the other) forward along a rope.
- Jump through a series of hula hoops laid on the floor like big footprints.

CHANGE OF DIRECTION

1. Develop the ability to change direction 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume READY position.
b. Shift weight to left foot by bending left knee more than right.
c. Step or slide the right foot to the right.
d. Point the right foot in the direction of intended travel.
e. Shift weight to right foot by bending right knee more than the left.
f. Bring left foot parallel to right foot.
g. Resume READY position.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **It is important to keep head up and look to the new direction of travel before stepping.**

DRILLS

- Star turns—step around in an inward facing circle until you have completed one loop.
- Step around in an outward facing circle to complete one loop.

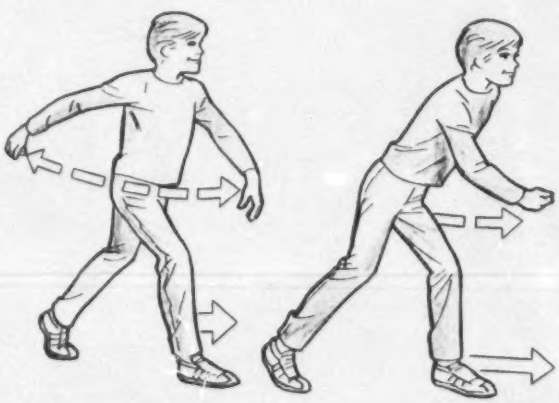
DIAGONAL STRIDE

DIAGONAL STRIDE

1. Develop the ability to use a diagonal stride 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume the READY position.
b. Stride forward with left foot and right arm.
c. Stand on left foot while striding forward with right foot and left arm as right arm comes back to maintain balance.
d. Repeat b and c.



TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **When striding, attempt to push off from the ball of one foot while landing on the heel of the other.**
- **Stride far enough with each step to get a full extension with the trailing leg.**
- **Use a full arm swing in a relaxed pendulum motion keeping arms fairly straight throughout.**

2. Develop the ability to use a diagonal stride with ski poles 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Grip poles properly by placing the hand up through the loop of the strap and grasping both the strap and the hand grip of the pole. (Pole strap should be adjusted so that the top of the pole remains between the thumb and the forefinger throughout the poling motion).
b. Place the tip of the left pole in ground even with the right foot.
c. Stride forward with the left foot and right arm.
d. Place the tip of the right pole in the ground even with the left foot.
e. Stride forward with the right foot and left arm.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Place ski pole tip in the ground at slight forward angle, so that the hand grip (top of pole) is ahead of the tip.**
- **Push down through the pole as you stride to get a longer, more powerful stride.**
- **See that the pole tip is placed even with the opposite foot and at a forward angle whenever this skill is practiced. A sloppy pole plant makes skiing much more difficult.**
- **Keep head and eyes up.**

DRILLS

- **Go for a short hike with ski poles and use diagonal striding instead of just plain walking.**
- **Gradually increase the distance of hikes with poles. It's a great conditioner as well as practice of an important skill.**
- **Hill bounding with poles is another good exercise because it introduces uphill climbing. Find a moderate slope that is 15 to 20 meters long. The difference between striding and bounding is that the stride length is shorter, the step is crisper, more powerful and the arm push is stronger. Bound up the hill with crisp quick steps.**
- **Incorporate hill bounding into your pole hiking. The steeper the hill the shorter your steps should be.**

HOME FITNESS PROGRAM FOR SKIING

Because skiing is a strenuous sport, here are some exercises which can be incorporated into a home fitness program that specifically tunes muscles for skiing. Our objective is to develop a program that the athletes can do on their own.

As an instructor you have the responsibility to teach each student an exercise program and supervise until he/she can do the program in sequence on his/her own. Start with a small number of repetitions and do the entire program several times. The sequence should be the same every day. Remember that doing each exercise correctly is more important than the number of repetitions. Have the athlete do the program three times a week. If the workout is less than fifteen minutes, add more repetitions or more exercises.

Since cross country skiing is an endurance sport, a running program in addition to the home fitness program would be very helpful for the athletes. It will also speed their ability to learn to ski when they get on snow.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Throughout any of the activities you should constantly emphasize to the student to do the maneuver correctly (Look ahead, balanced position, arms quiet and feet pointing in the right direction).**

1. Perform a calf lift 100% of the time.

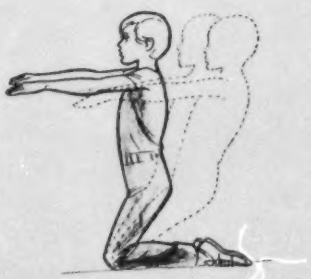
TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume and maintain READY position.
b. Lift heels as high as possible by pressing the knees up and forward.
c. Hold for a count of 4.
d. Lower heels but do not touch heels to ground.
e. Repeat.

2. Perform a Z-lean 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Kneel with body perpendicular to the floor.
b. Keep back straight and arms extended parallel to the floor.
c. Lean back, keeping thighs straight with body, and arms out.
d. Continue to lean back until muscle resistance is felt.
e. Hold to a 4 count.
f. Return to upright position.
g. Repeat, attempting to go back more each time, but do not strain.



3. Perform knee bends 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand as high as possible on toes in READY position.
b. Balance body by placing both hands against the wall (gradually decrease to both index fingers).
c. Lower body so the thighs become parallel to the floor (do not go lower than parallel).
d. Return to READY position.
e. Repeat as many times as possible (keep back straight).

4. Performs standing leg circles correctly 100% of the time.

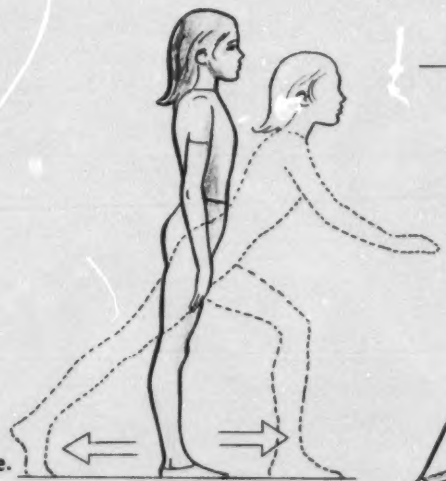
TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand with feet hip-width apart.
b. Place hands on hips.
c. Raise one leg to the side as high as possible.
d. Make five small circles.
e. Repeat with other leg.

5. Perform squats correctly 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

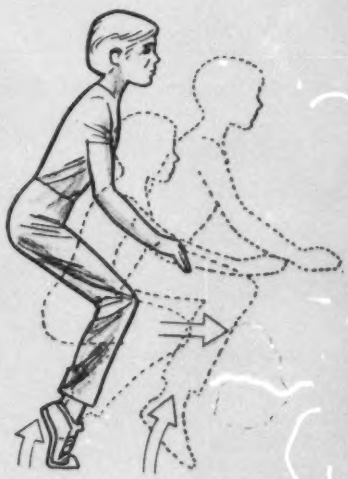
a. Extend the left leg back and straight.
b. Extend the right leg forward and bend to a right angle.
c. Keep back upright and straight.
d. Now reverse.



6. Perform squat jumps correctly 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

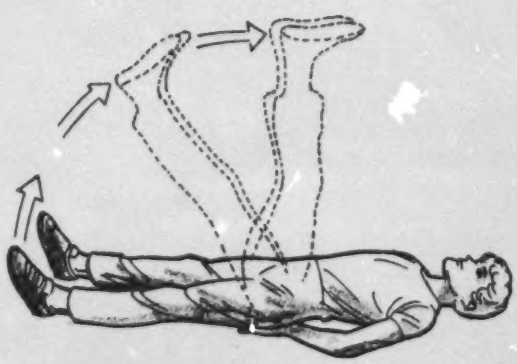
a. From READY Position, stand high on toes.
b. Bend the knees forward until the thighs are parallel to the floor.
c. Jump up as high as possible staying in READY position.
d. Concentrate on keeping the back straight.



7. Perform leg lifts correctly 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

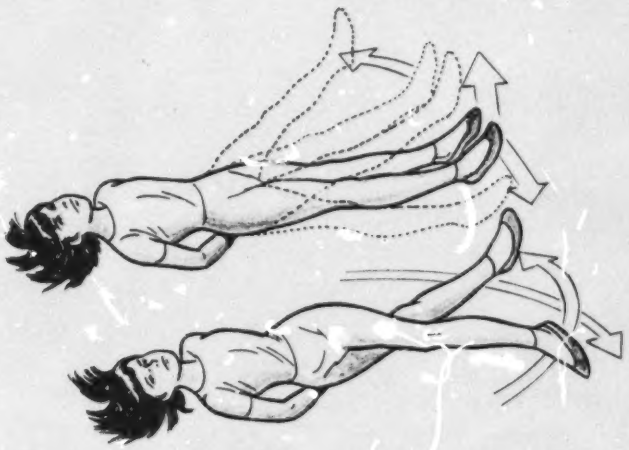
a. Lie on back with hands under hips.
b. Place palms flat on floor.
c. Keep the legs straight.
d. Raise the feet 15 to 20 centimeters off the floor.
e. Continue to raise both legs up slowly until perpendicular to the floor.
f. Lower to 15-20 centimeters off the floor.
g. Repeat.



8. Perform leg scissors correctly 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

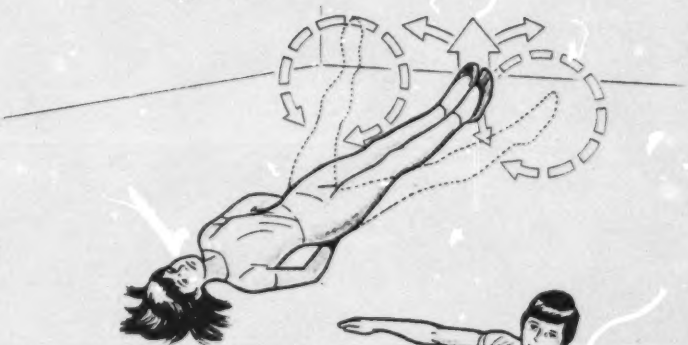
a. Lie on back with hands under hips.
b. Place palms flat on floor.
c. Keep the legs straight.
d. Raise the feet 15 to 20 centimeters off the floor.
e. Spread legs as far as possible.
f. Bring back together and cross.
g. Repeat.



9. Perform leg circles correctly 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Lie on back with hands under hips.
b. Place palms flat on floor.
c. Keep the legs straight.
d. Raise feet 15 to 20 centimeters off the floor.
e. Spread feet in large circles in opposite directions.
f. Reverse directions of circling feet.



10. Perform side-double leg lifts correctly 100% of the time.

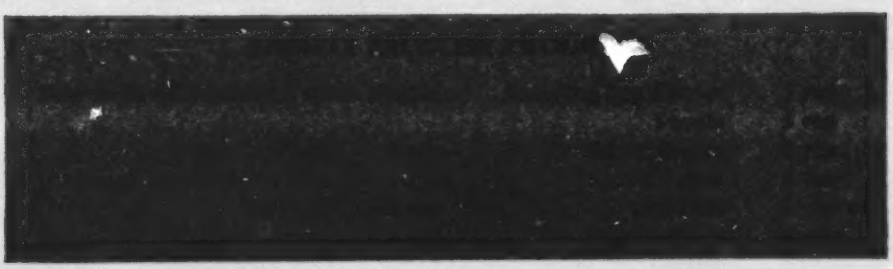
TASK ANALYSIS

a. Lie on side placing bottom hand on floor for balance.
b. Raise both legs simultaneously about 60 centimeters off the floor.
c. Lower to start.
d. Repeat.

11. Perform step-ups correctly 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand facing a chair or bench in relaxed ski stance.
b. Step up with the left foot.
c. Bring up the right foot, staying in relaxed ski stance.
d. Step down with the left foot.
e. Bring down the right foot.
f. Alternate legs taking first step.
g. Repeat exercise, stepping up sideways.



SKILLS ASSESSMENT— LEVEL I AND LEVEL II

INSTRUCTIONS

The Sports Skills Assessment is designed to determine the student's present level of functioning within a specific skill or sport and to determine the student's progress through training.

In administering the test, observe each student as he/she performs each test item. Score the student accordingly by checking the box located to the left of the task performed. If there is any question as to the student's competence in a particular skill, require the student to perform the task 3 out of 5 times.

After scoring each student, add up the total number of boxes and indicate the student's present level of ability (i.e., Beginner, Rookie, Winner). If the student is performing at a higher level than measured in the Skills Assessment—Level I, re-evaluate the student utilizing Skills Assessment—Level II.

Skills Assessment—Level I

Scoring Level— indicates the student's level of achievement

0-10 BEGINNER/11-20 ROOKIE/21-30 WINNER

Test Item #1 **Recovery Skills**

- ☐ Stands up with instructor's assistance
- ☐ Stands up independently, but lacks control
- ☐ Stands up independently under control
- ☐ Stands up and assumes ski READY position (perpendicular to the fall line, if on a slope)
- ☐ Demonstrates controlled falling

Test Item #2 **Walking**

- ☐ Assumes Ready position under control
- ☐ Walks forward with instructor's assistance
- ☐ Walks forward independently.
- ☐ Performs a shuffle slide

Test Item #3 **Turns**

- ☐ Makes attempt to change direction on skis
- ☐ Executes an outward star turn with assistance
- ☐ Executes an outward star turn to both left and right independently.
- ☐ Executes an inward star turn with assistance
- ☐ Executes an inward star turn to both left and right independently.

Test Item #4 **Climbing**

- ☐ Side steps on flat terrain
- ☐ Side steps up a hill
- ☐ Side steps up a hill without skis sliding sideways
- ☐ Herringbones up a hill with assistance
- ☐ Herringbones up a hill independently

Test Item #5 **Skiing Participation**

- ☐ Understands objectives of ski lesson
- ☐ Understands use of ski equipment
- ☐ Understands and demonstrates safety and courtesy to others while skiing
- ☐ Can identify slope or trail appropriate to their ability

_____TOTAL SCORE

Skills Assessment—Level II

Scoring Level— indicates the student's level of achievement

31-40 STAR/41-50 SUPER CHAMP/51-60 SUPERSTAR

Test Item #1 **Downhill Run**

- ☐ Makes an attempt to ski downhill
- ☐ Skis down a straight runout under control
- ☐ Performs a straight wedge
- ☐ Performs a wedge stop

Test Item #2 **Turns**

- ☐ Performs a wedge turn with instructor's assistance
- ☐ Performs a wedge turn independently
- ☐ Performs a wedge turn to a stop
- ☐ Performs a skate turn
- ☐ Performs a skate turn to a stop

Test Item #3 **Striding**

- ☐ Performs a diagonal stride
- ☐ Performs a diagonal stride with poles
- ☐ Skis up an incline using a diagonal stride
- ☐ Performs a diagonal stride with kick and glide
- ☐ Performs a double poling stride.

Test Item #4 **Racing**

- ☐ Can identify start and finish of a race course
- ☐ Participates in 100m cross country ski race
- ☐ Participates in 1km cross country ski race
- ☐ Participates in 3km cross country ski race
- ☐ Knows how to pass and be passed during a race

Test Item #5 **Skiing Participation**

- ☐ Understands universal trail signs and can choose trail appropriate to individual ability
- ☐ Can ski with a group and doesn't need individual attention
- ☐ Can ski easiest (green circle) trails safely
- ☐ Can ski "More difficult" (blue square) trails safely
- ☐ Can ski "expert" (black diamond) trails safely

_____TOTAL SCORE

TRACK PREPARATION

The ski area should be advised of the ability of the group. Appoint an aide or experienced skier to assume responsibility for preventing anyone from falling too far behind. Keep weather and snow conditions in mind. Wind may make it necessary to move to a sheltered area, and icy trails may limit the day's activities to the flats. Be flexible about moving the instruction area when necessary.

Gentle hills for beginners should be packed with a long runout so that they are not overly concerned with stopping. A more advanced group dictates more varied terrain. If there is room, pack out a large area (half a soccer field) for some fun games and races. On the flats, ski tracks are necessary and can be set by skis or by specially designed track-setters towed behind snow machines.

For instructional purposes three layouts are recommended:

Perpendicular Tracks

The most common teaching arrangement for diagonal stride and double poling is a series of parallel tracks 20-30 meters long on a flat or very gentle terrain. These tracks for students should be intersected by an instructor's demonstration track cutting across perpendicularly near one end. The tracks can also be used for relay races.

Loops

Another tracking arrangement that combines all terrain possibilities is laid out in a loop, with some flat and some gradual hill sections. If two tracks are set next to each other, the instructor can ski beside the students and give more individual attention. This loop layout with its ups and downs is exciting for the Special Olympians.

Figure 8

A final tracking arrangement that combines multiple skills is a figure 8 layout. In order to complete the figure 8 the students must execute the diagonal stride and a series of step turns at each corner.

Watch for the excitement generated as the Special Olympians crisscross each other's tracks. Try to establish a consistent rhythm among the group in order to avoid possible congestion at the intersection of the figure 8.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Discuss the boundaries of the cross country course with the student.**
- **Take student outside and demonstrate how to establish the boundaries.**
- **Aid the student in marking off the course.**
- **Discuss and point out what objects are to be removed from the skiing area.**

WARM UP

2.0 Given demonstration and practice the student will will always warm up before cross country skiing.

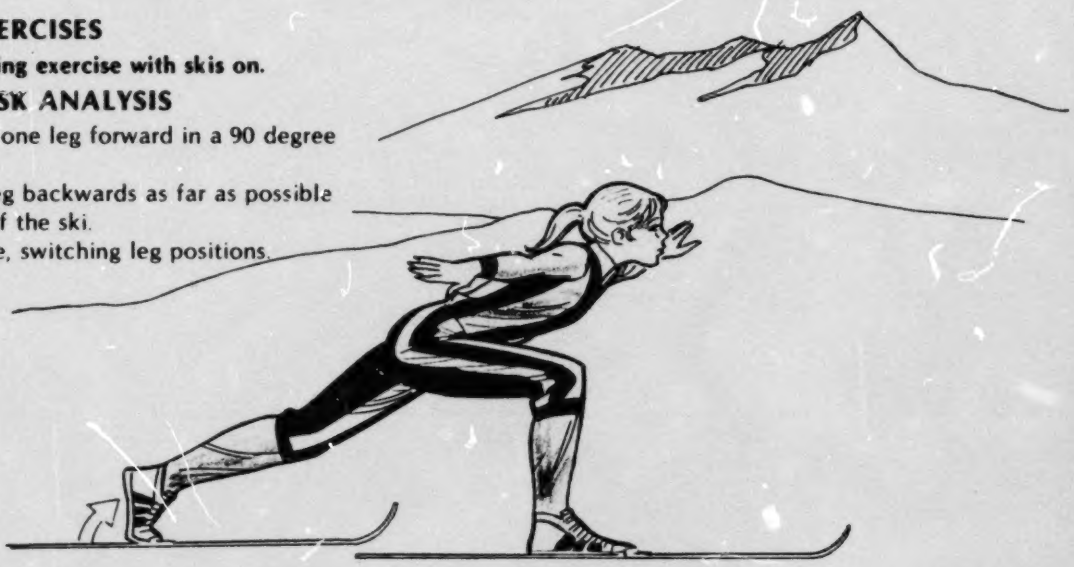
WARMUP

STRETCHING EXERCISES

1. Perform a stretching exercise with skis on.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Step and bend one leg forward in a 90 degree angle.
b. Extend other leg backwards as far as possible
c. Lift the heel off the ski.
d. Repeat exercise, switching leg positions.



2. Perform a foot swing with skis.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume a standing position.
b. Position skis parallel to one another.
c. Lift one foot.
d. Swing the foot/ski freely backward and forward.
e. Place foot/ski down.
f. Repeat exercise with other foot/ski.

3. Perform toe touches with skis on.

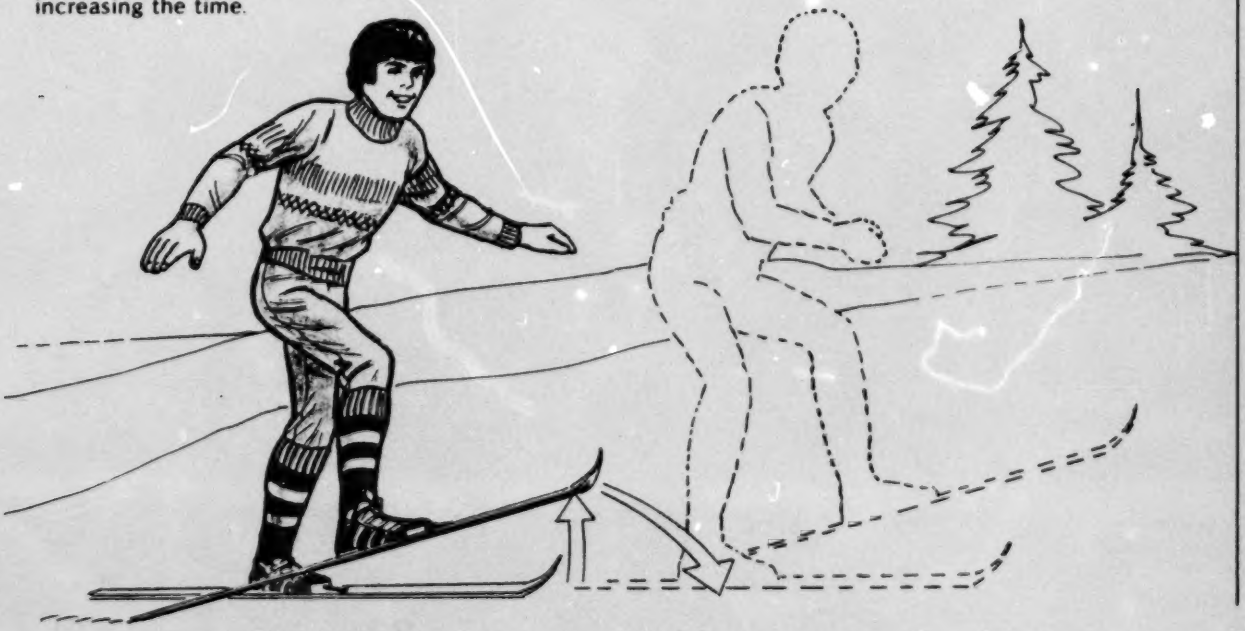
TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume a standing position.
b. Position skis parallel to one another, hip-width apart.
c. Keep legs as straight as possible.
d. Bend from the waist and reach as far down as possible.
e. Try to touch toes or skis, if possible.
f. Hold stretch for 5 seconds.
g. Repeat exercise 5 times.

4. Run in place with skis.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume a standing position with skis parallel to one another, hip-width apart.
b. Lift one foot/ski and place it back down.
c. Lift other foot/ski and place it back down.
d. Run in place.
e. Continue exercise for 30 seconds, gradually increasing the time.



READY POSITION

3.0 Given demonstration and practice the student will successfully execute cross country skiing skills.

1. READY POSITION

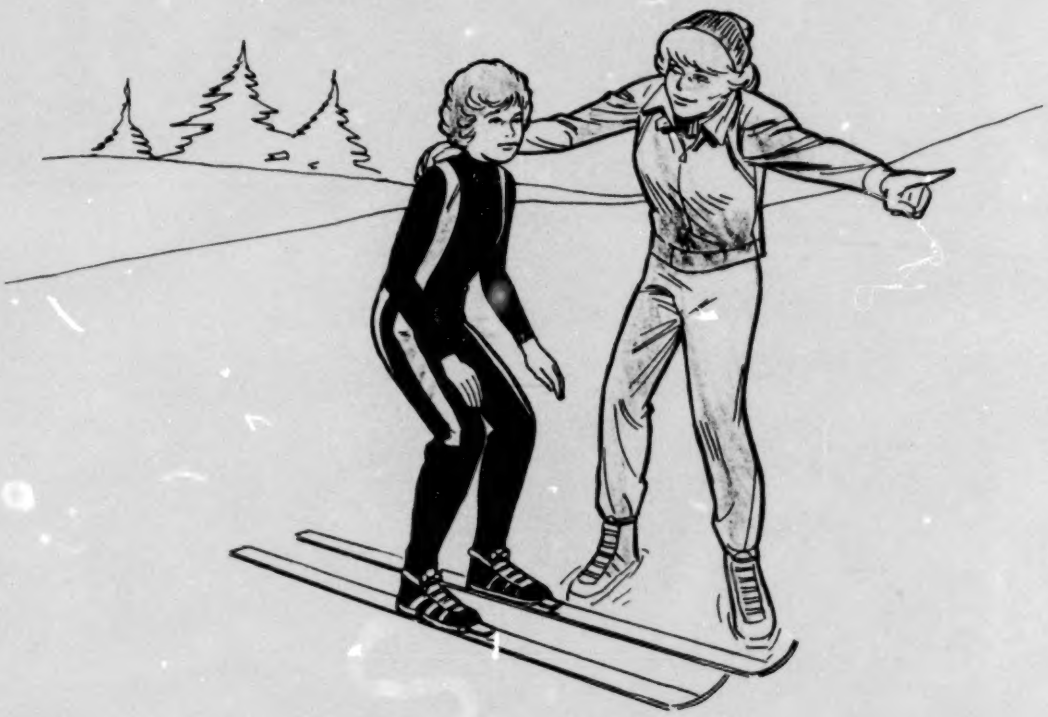
1. Demonstrate the ability to assume the READY position 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Place skis parallel to one another, hip-width apart.
b. Flex knees and ankles slightly.
c. Bend slightly forward at the waist.
d. Keep chin up.
e. Look ahead in the direction of travel.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Have student practice the READY position on dry land.**
- **Demonstrate correct READY position, emphasizing looking ahead and keeping chin up.**
- **In order to make a point or help the student better understand a command, use the "touch system". For instance, touch the hip, knee and ankle to indicate the area he/she is expected to bend or flex. This system is very effective in assisting the student to understand the proper position he/she is expected to maintain on his/her skis. The touch system should be used throughout this unit as a teaching aid.**

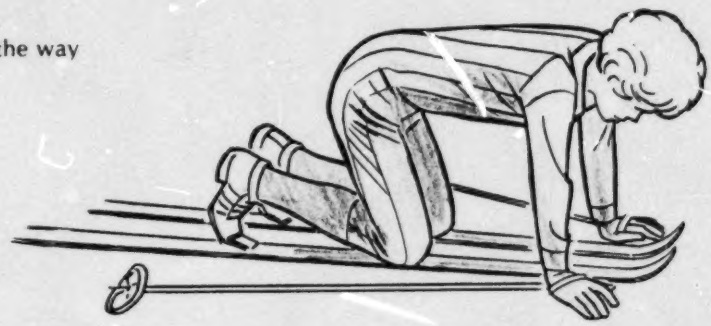


2. RECOVERY

1. Demonstrate the ability to fall under control 3 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Lower the body and lean to the side.
b. Keep hands, arms, and poles out of the way while falling.
c. Relax.



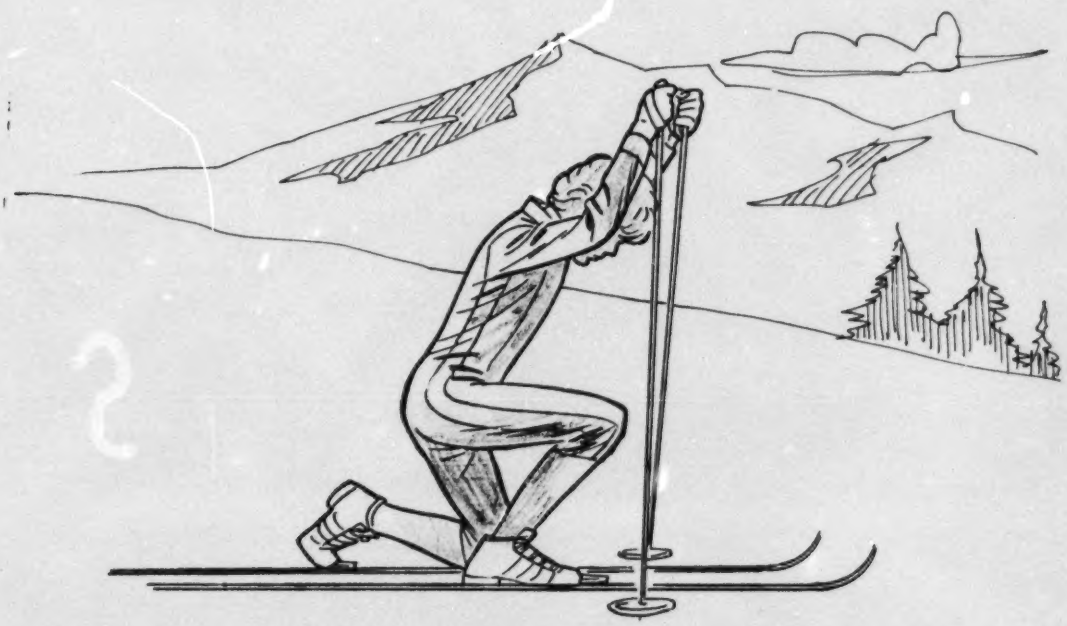
2. Demonstrate the ability to stand up after falling down 3 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Move skis parallel with each other.
b. Place the skis perpendicular to the fall line.
c. Crawl toward the tips.
d. Kneel over skis.
e. Raise one knee and set the foot.
f. Plant poles in front and stand up.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Move student's skis into position. Physically assist student in standing up.**
- **If skis are sliding forward or backward, instruct the student to place the skis perpendicular to the fall line. (The line a ball would follow if rolled down a hill). When standing, the nose should be in line over the knees.**
- **Have the student practice standing at home or at the gym to increase flexibility and to strengthen muscles.**



FORWARD WALKING

3. FORWARD WALKING

1. Demonstrate the ability to walk forward on skis a distance of 25 meters.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume a READY position.
b. Place skis parallel to one another.
c. Shift weight to left foot.
d. Slide unweighted (right) ski forward.
e. Transfer weight to right foot and slide unweighted (left) ski forward.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Emphasize proper weight transfer. Stand behind the student, straddling the skis. Place your hands on the student's hips. Apply downward pressure to his/her left hip while simultaneously tapping the student's right leg to initiate sliding forward of right ski. Gradually reduce physical assistance.**
- **Have student maintain balance while transferring weight to one ski by lifting unweighted ski off the ground.**

4. STAR TURNS

1. Demonstrate the ability to do an outward star turn 4 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume READY position.
b. Lift tip of right ski, leaving tail on the snow.
c. Move tip of right ski to the right and put it back on the snow forming a small "V" or pie shape.
d. Move tip of left ski to the right and put it down parallel to right ski.
e. Continue until you have completed a circle.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Poles are not needed for this maneuver and should not be used at first. When the students can do outward and inward star turns in both directions comfortably, have them do the turns with ski poles.**
- **If a student is having difficulty, physically assist him/her by moving the skis into and out of wedge or "V" position.**

2. Demonstrate the ability to do an inward star turn 4 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume READY position.
b. Lift right ski to the right and place back on the snow so that the tips are together and the tails apart forming a small "V" or pie shape.
c. Lift left ski and place back on the snow parallel to right ski.
d. Continue until you have completed a circle.

CLIMBING

5. CLIMBING

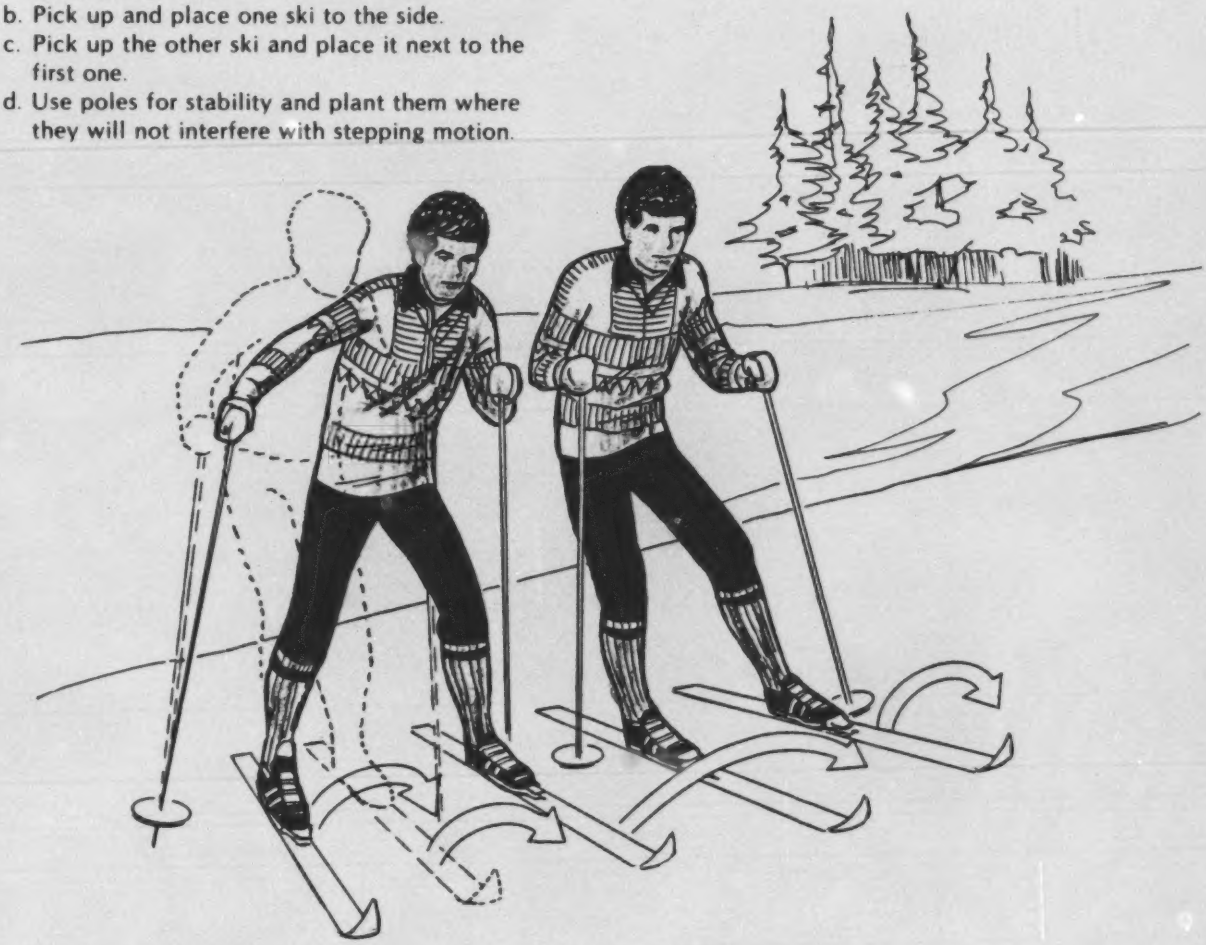
1. Demonstrate the ability to side step on flat terrain 4 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Place skis parallel to one another.
b. Pick up and place one ski to the side.
c. Pick up the other ski and place it next to the first one.
d. Use poles for stability and plant them where they will not interfere with stepping motion.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

Have students side step on level ground a distance of ten meters in a straight line.



2. Demonstrate the ability to climb a hill by side stepping 3 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Place skis parallel to one another and keep skis perpendicular to the fall line.
b. Roll knees and ankles into or up the hill, forcing the ski edges into the snow.
c. Shift weight to uphill side of both feet.
d. Take a small step uphill with the uphill ski.
e. Reset ski on snow and repeat, one foot after the other.
f. Keep skis parallel to one another at all times.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **If the student's skis are sliding sideways down the hill, roll his/her knees into the hill, causing the skis to edge. Assist the student in walking on the uphill side of feet to get an edge.**
- **Demonstrate side stepping up a moderate slope.**
- **Always emphasize keeping skis perpendicular to the fall line.**
- **Have the student practice side stepping up a hill and also down a hill.**

3. Demonstrate the ability to climb a hill using the herringbone.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Stand facing up the fall line of a gentle slope.
b. Spread ski tips comfortably apart forming a "V".
c. Roll knees and ankles inward to set the inside edge of the skis into the hill.
d. Step alternately upward making sure the inside edge is set on each step.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **If skis slip backward use a wider "V".**
- **Physically assist the student standing behind him/her with your skis parallel to theirs.**
- **Move the knees in toward each other to get more "edge bite".**

6. STRAIGHT RUN

1. Demonstrate the ability to ski straight down a gentle hill without falling 3 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume READY position with feet hip width apart, hands on knees and head up.
b. Step skis into the fall line (down the hill).
c. Look in direction of travel.
d. Allow skis to run straight down the hill.
e. Glide to a stop on level ground.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Choice of terrain for straight running is very important. Start with a gentle slope of 5-15 meters with a flat runout long enough to allow the skier to glide to a stop. Avoid introducing any fear of gliding by using only as much of the slope as the student is comfortable with. Make it fun.**
- **Poles are not necessary and should not be used at first.**
- **Demonstrate the straight run first, then return to the student before having him/her do it.**
- **Emphasize maintaining the READY position throughout.**
- **If the student has trouble maintaining balance, try a wider stance.**
- **Constant falling may be due to fear and anxiety so consider moving to an easier slope.**

WEDGE

7. WEDGE

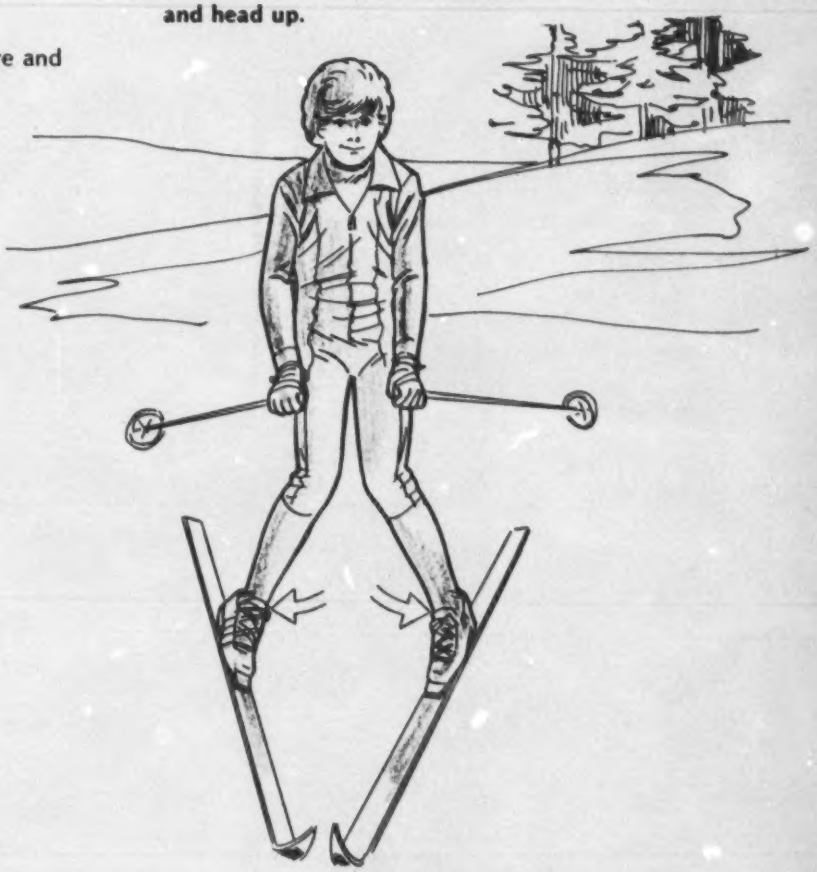
1. Demonstrate the ability to ski down a gentle hill in a wedge position without falling 3 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume a READY position.
b. Step into the fall line.
c. Spread legs and push out at the tails of the skis forming a "V".
d. Exert equal pressure on both skis.
e. Roll knees and ankles inward to apply pressure to the inside edges.
f. Look in direction of travel.
g. Control speed by the amount of pressure and edging exerted on the skis.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Practice wedge position on flat terrain until student becomes comfortable and relaxed with the movement.**
- **Hold tips of the student's skis and assist the student in moving into the fall line. Instruct the student to push or step the heels out to form a wedge. The outside edge of the skis should be off the snow with ski tips 5-8 centimeters apart and body evenly positioned.**
- **Maintain READY position with hands on knees and head up.**



2. Demonstrate the ability to wedge stop without falling 3 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume the wedge position (1a-1g).
b. Start down the hill in a controlled wedge.
c. Push heels farther apart, increasing wedge.
d. Lower hips, increasing knee and ankle bend.
e. Exert equal pressure on both skis until stopped.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Make a mark in the snow to indicate area where student should stop.**
- **If ski tips are crossing, emphasize keeping the knees and ankles flexed and pushing the skis apart into a wedge using equal outward pressure.**

8. TURNS

1. Demonstrate the ability to do a wedge turn to a stop without falling 3 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume the wedge position.
b. Start down the hill in a controlled wedge.
c. Shift weight to right ski by bending right leg slightly more than left.
d. Steer skis to the left with both feet and knees out of the fall line.
e. Stop.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Have the student ski to you. You can move around to change the radius of the turn.**
- **Demonstrate the wedge turn then return to the student and have him/her follow right behind while you do it again.**
- **Emphasize the sequence: Look ahead, shift the weight, steer the skis.**

2. Demonstrate the ability to perform a step turn to a stop without falling 3 out of 5 times.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume READY position.
b. Step into the fall line.
c. Allow skis to run straight down a gentle slope.
d. Step skis as in an outward star turn, completely out of the fall line until coming to a stop.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Practice star turns on the flat before doing it on the slope.**
- **Start with a very gentle slope at first and then move to a slope that is only slightly steeper.**

DIAGONAL STRIDE

9. DIAGONAL STRIDE

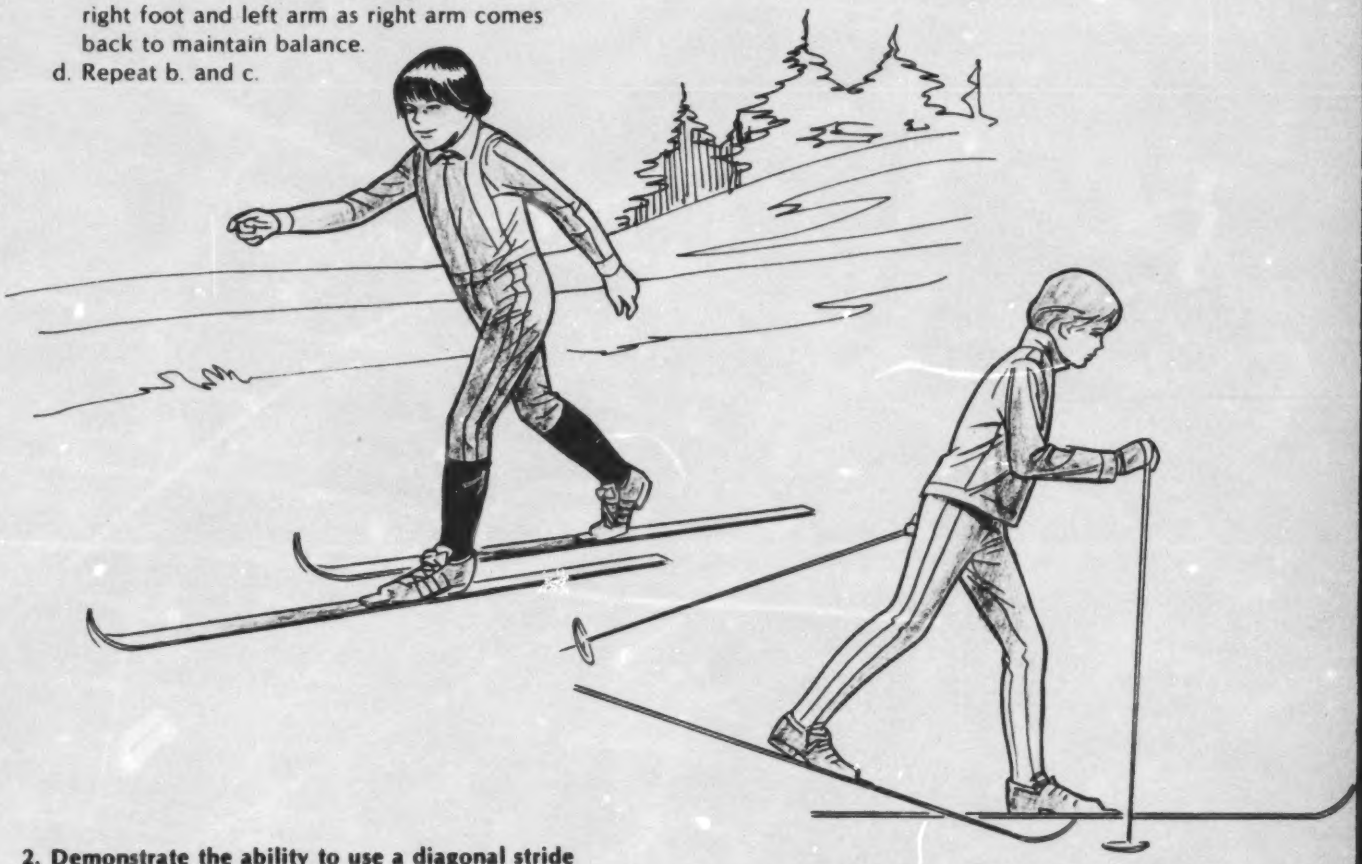
1. Demonstrate the ability to use a diagonal stride while skiing 80% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume READY position.
b. Stride forward with left foot and right arm.
c. Stand on left ski while striding forward with right foot and left arm as right arm comes back to maintain balance.
d. Repeat b. and c.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Look ahead.**
- **Lean in direction of travel.**
- **Stride far enough with each step to get a full extension with the trailing leg.**
- **Use a full arm swing in a relaxed pendulum motion keeping the arms fairly straight.**



2. Demonstrate the ability to use a diagonal stride while skiing with ski poles 80% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Grip poles properly by placing the hand up through the loop of the strap and grasping both the strap and hand grip of the pole. (Pole strap should be adjusted so that the top of the pole remains between the thumb and forefinger throughout the poling motion).
b. Place the tip of the left pole in the snow even with the right foot.
c. Stride forward with the left foot and right arm.
d. Place the tip of the right pole in the snow even with the left foot.
e. Stride forward with the right foot and left arm.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Place the pole in the snow at a slight forward angle, so that the hand grip is ahead of the tip.**
- **Push down through the pole as you stride to get a longer, more powerful stride.**
- **See that the pole tip is placed in the snow even with the opposite foot and at a forward angle. A pole that is too far forward, back, or to the side will be ineffective.**

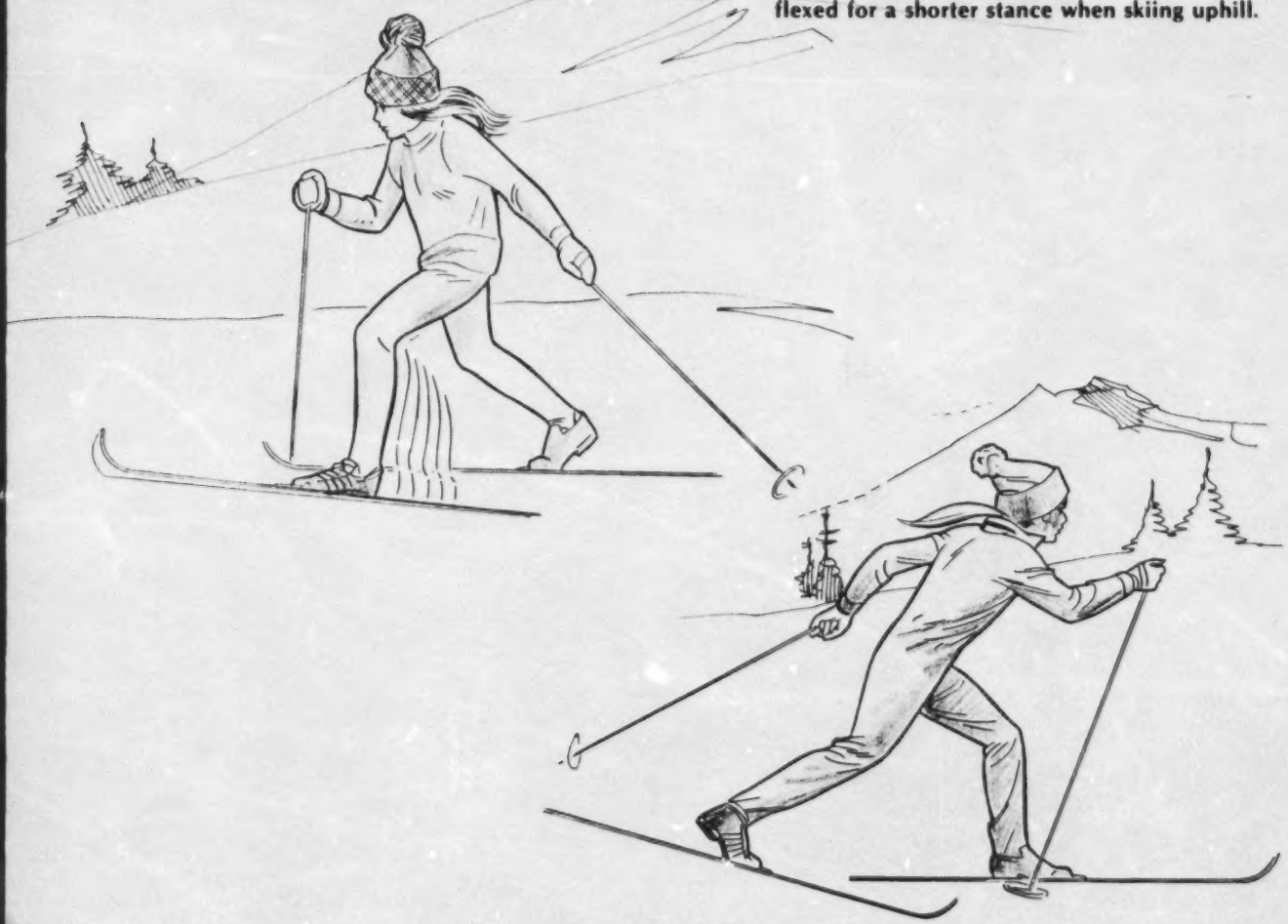
3. Demonstrate the ability to ski up an incline using a diagonal stride 80% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Approach an incline using a diagonal stride.
b. As the angle of the incline increases, shorten stride length.
c. Increase tempo of stride.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Emphasize keeping the head up and looking ahead.**
- **Keep your weight directly over your feet. Back slipping is the result of weight being too far forward.**
- **The shorter stride and quicker tempo preclude a full extension of the trailing leg. Legs should be flexed for a shorter stance when skiing uphill.**



4. Demonstrate the ability to kick and glide while skiing cross country 80% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Ski along level ground using a diagonal stride.
b. Lean forward with upper body in direction of travel.
c. Increase power in the step at beginning of stride.
d. Increase stride length.
e. Glide on forward ski at the end of stride.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **The kick and glide is the basis of cross country skiing because it is an efficient way to cover great distances on skis.**
- **The leading arm and trailing leg should form a straight line during the glide phase. This creates a balanced position which allows for a longer glide.**
- **Kick from the ball of the foot and glide on the heel.**

DOUBLE POLING

10. DOUBLE POLING

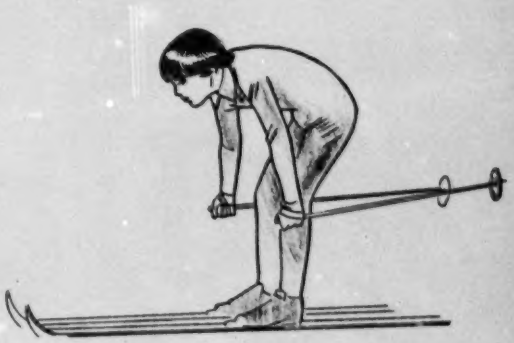
1. Demonstrate the ability to double pole while skiing 80% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume the READY position.
b. Grip poles properly.
c. Swing both hands forward together.
d. Plant the poles slightly ahead of the feet.
e. Initiate the poling force while gliding with downward pressure on the poles.
f. Continue the motion, using arm strength and body weight.
g. Pass hands just below knees, bending upper body at the waist.
h. Glide on both skis.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Double poling should be utilized on flats to supplement diagonal stride, especially in hard-packed or icy areas, increasing skier stability.**
- **Emphasize bending at the waist and not at the knees (knees relaxed). Many students may need to develop strength for this maneuver.**



2. Demonstrate ability to double pole with a kick while skiing 80% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Assume READY position.
b. Grip poles properly.
c. Stride forward with one foot and both hands.
d. Plant poles slightly ahead of feet.
e. Initiate the poling force while gliding with downward pressure on the poles.
f. Continue the motion, using arm strength and body weight.
g. Pass hands just below knees, bending upper body at the waist.
h. Glide on both skis.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **A good follow-through with the arms will develop a smoother, more powerful double poling stroke.**
- **Be sure to take advantage of the momentum you've created with a strong double pole stroke by gliding until your speed slows significantly.**

4.0 Given demonstration and practice the student will execute the necessary skills for ski racing.

1. Demonstrate the ability to participate in a 100 meter cross country ski race.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Warm up properly.
b. Identify and line up on the starting line.
c. Await starters signal to "GO".
d. Start at the starters command.
e. Ski in a straight line to the finish.
f. Cross the finish line and stop.
g. Clear the finish area after the race.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Skiers should be trained to look ahead and stay in the track assigned to them.**
- **Through training the skiers should find the fastest pace that they can use to complete the race.**

2. Demonstrate the ability to participate in a 1 kilometer cross country ski race.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Warm up properly.
b. Identify and line up on the starting line.
c. Await starters signal to "GO".
d. Start at the starters command.
e. Follow the trail for the length of the course.
f. Call "TRACK" when overtaking a slower skier.
g. Yield the track when overtaken by a faster skier.
h. Cross the finish line and stop.
i. Clear the finish area after the race.

3. Demonstrate the ability to participate in a 3 kilometer cross country ski race.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Warm up properly.
b. Identify and line up on the starting line.
c. Await starters signal to "GO".
d. Start at the starters command.
e. Follow the trail for the length of the course.
f. Call "TRACK" when overtaking a slower skier.
g. Yield the track when overtaken by a faster skier.
h. Cross the finish line and stop.
i. Clear the finish area after the race.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Preview the course with skiers before each race to be sure that they know the route and identify any potential trouble spots.**
- **Through training, develop tempo and stride for the various terrains.**
- **Through training, develop the fastest pace that can be used to complete the whole course.**

5.0 Given regulation or modified rules the student will adhere safely to those rules and regulations while skiing.

1. Demonstrate proper safety while skiing 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Wear non-breakable sun glasses or goggles.
b. Stay to the edge of the trails if you must walk.
c. Obey trail markers.
d. Select trails which are appropriate for level of ability and ski under control.
e. Ski cautiously in areas where there are blind spots.
f. Warm up before skiing to loosen muscles.
g. Take it easy the first run.
h. Cooperate with the ski patrol.
i. Be physically fit.
j. Check equipment often.
k. Learn and recognize trail signs.
l. Ski defensively; be aware of other skiers at all times.

2. Understand and adhere to the DON'Ts while skiing.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Don't ski through a ski class.
b. Don't walk on the trails without skis.
c. Don't go off the marked trails alone.
d. Don't go out without proper clothing.
e. Don't ski alone in poor visibility.

3. Always adhere to the rules of the trails while skiing.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Ski in control.
b. Check ski traffic before starting.
c. Proceed carefully when overtaking another skier.
d. Let skiers below know which side (left/right) when passing.
e. Yield the right of way when entering from side trails.

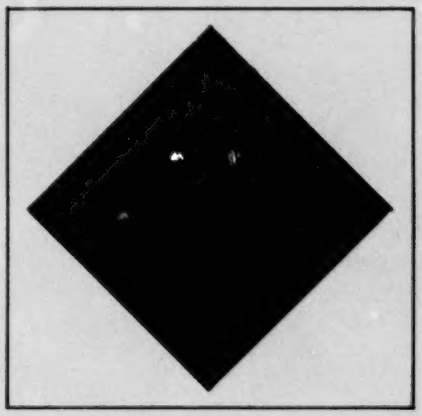
4. Recognize and understand the purpose of cross country ski signs 100% of the time.

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Identify all trail markers.
b. Obey all trail markers.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Discuss various cross country ski signs and have student identify the purpose of each**
- **Explain the purpose of signs 1) inform 2) educate 3) regulate and 4) warn.**



1. TRAIL MARKERS

The national standard marker for cross country and ski touring trails is the azure blue diamond. It has been adopted by the United States Ski Association, the National Ski Touring Operator's Association, and most government agencies.

Some trails are also marked with numbers, symbols, letters, and color coded signs.

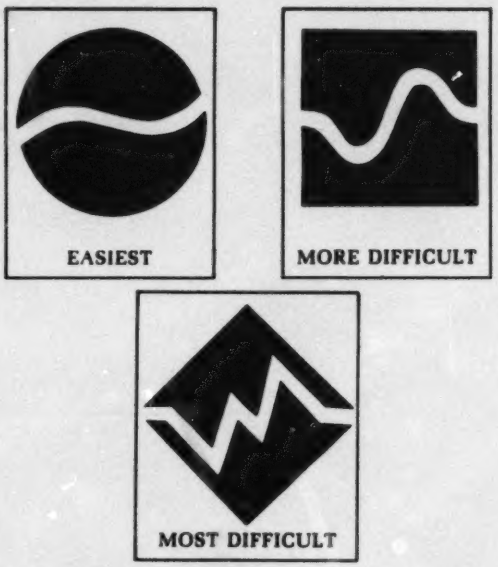
2. CROSS COUNTRY SKIER

This sign is used to designate a trail as a cross country ski trail. It is used at the trailhead and on printed information.

3. RELATIVE DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY SIGNS

These signs are used to designate the degree of difficulty of a trail in your system.

These signs are used on the trail board and map, and at every trailhead.



4. CAUTION OR WARNING SIGNS

These signs have both permanent and temporary use. The "Caution!" sign can be used to mark a spring washout, and can be used permanently to mark a busy intersection. The other warning signs are self-explanatory.

They should be posted on the trailboard, at the trailhead, and, as required, on the trail.

5. REGULATORY SIGNS

These signs are used to regulate the use of a trail. The Trail Closed sign should be used on the trailboard, and when feasible, at the trailhead. Other regulatory signs, particularly the full season signs, such as No Dogs, should be used on the trailboard and map, and at the trailheads.

COURTESY

COURTESY

1. **Demonstrate courtesy on the trails 100% of the time.**

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Don't break in trail lines; wait for your turn.
b. Be careful not to step on or ski over other people's skis.
c. Get out of the way as quickly as possible if you fall.

2. **Demonstrate courtesy while skiing 100% of the time.**

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Try not to ski "too close" to other skiers.
b. Don't cross in front of other moving skiers.
c. Remember that the fast skier has the responsibility when overtaking another skier.
d. Try to get out of the way of on-coming skiers after falling.
e. Fill up holes made in the snow.
f. Be careful not to hit others with skis or poles when carrying equipment.
g. Give way to beginners.

3. **Demonstrate courtesy when stopping 100% of the time.**

TASK ANALYSIS

a. Do not stop in a narrow place on the trails.
b. Do not stop abruptly, especially in blind spots to on-coming skiers.
c. Stop below a stationary skier and well above the trail lines. Avoid making a sudden stop where an error might result in hitting another skier.
d. Look before starting again; don't pull out in front of others.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- **Discuss the importance of courtesy on the trails and always commend the student after demonstrating courtesy while participating in skiing.**
- **Have student sit out a ski run if he/she does not follow safety rules when skiing the trails. (i.e. skis down the slope recklessly.)**

MODIFICATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

The focus of this Cross Country Skiing guide is to assist students to function at their maximum performance level. Achieving this goal can be facilitated through the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Realistic goals and objectives should be developed that present a challenge but do not force the child into experiences loaded with failure. To provide positive experiences means that many handicapped students will require instructional activities that are adapted to their particular needs. Some examples of activity adaptations are given here.

MODIFYING THE RULES OF AN ACTIVITY

This can be accomplished in several ways. Special Olympians are often denied the experience of the event because of the frequent stops due to rule infractions. Therefore, instructors should not be reluctant to modify the rules (i.e., minimize the amount of vertical rise or drop) as long as the major objectives of the event (i.e., skiing the distance) is not disturbed.

ACCOMMODATING THE STUDENT'S SPECIAL NEEDS

Length of races may be shortened for Special Olympians with lower extremity weakness. An audible, directional device or the sound of the coach's voice can be used to aid a visually impaired student skiing the race.

ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Teachers can structure lessons so that students are asked to respond to challenging questions such as "Can you ski to me?"," Can you show me two ways of climbing up a slope?". Such an approach permits students with various levels of ability to respond in ways that allow for success. Obviously, variations in response to these commands would be apparent from student to student depending on the level of ability and severity of impairment.

REDUCING SKIING DISTANCE

Special Olympians with gross motor deficits and/or associated disorders with movement limitations will benefit from activities in which their skiing distance is reduced. Twenty-five or fifty meter sprints could be substituted for the official 100 meter distance. Adaptations such as these permit an equalizing of ability based on student's movement capabilities.

CHANGING THE METHOD OF COMMUNICATION

Students sometimes require communication systems that are specific to their needs. For example, verbally explaining a task may not match up well with some student's information processing systems. Information which is more specific might be provided in other ways. The instructor or peer teacher, for example, could simply demonstrate the sports skill. Also, the instructor could utilize dye marking on the snow of his/her ski tracks to indicate proper ski placement during a skate turn.

Some students may need not only hear or see a skill, but also to read a description of the skill. This need can be met for poor or non-readers through use of a poster board to which stick figures are attached to show the sequence necessary for a skill like tail star turn.

ADAPTATIONS

More specific adaptations for associated impairments are listed below:

Orthopedic Impairments

Place a wedge on the ski to equalize the pelvis, if the student has one shorter leg.

Visual Impairments

Always ski with a partner; ski on two track trails.

Auditory Impairments

Use "touch system" when teaching.
Learn and use sign language.

INFUSION CHART

ARTS	Makes ski trail signs.
SCIENCE	Understands why body turns when shifting weight on skis and how to direct body in desired direction. Locates center of balance for the body. Understands movement of the body and weight distribution. Understands fall line principle.
INDUSTRIAL ARTS	Takes care of skiing equipment. Repairs equipment. Designs courses and sets cross country tracks.
MATHEMATICS	Realizes the cost of purchasing equipment and clothing. Measures ski and pole height.
HOME ECONOMICS	Dresses appropriately for skiing. Chooses appropriate clothing for various weather.
HEALTH	Practices safety skills when skiing. Knows basic first aid for minor injuries (scrapes, scratches, frost bite).
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	Demonstrates warm-up exercises and dryland activities. Understands and demonstrates rules and skills for skiing. Practices refining skiing skills. Recognizes the leisure value of cross country skiing.
READING/LANGUAGE	Listens to instructions and follows directions. Expresses himself while skiing. Reads trail signs and listens to instructions while learning to ski.
SOCIAL STUDIES	Identifies and locates neighborhood facilities where cross country skiing is available (parks, golf courses, etc.).

TERMINOLOGY AND RESOURCES

Cross Country Skiing
Skiing on groomed, prepared trails with tracks laid out by using a mechanical tracksetter or by other means.

Diagonal Stride
Opposite arm and leg move together as in walking.

Double Pole
Planting of both poles together, slightly ahead of the feet and initiating forward gliding by applying downward force on both poles (straps) simultaneously.

Downhill Ski
The ski closest to the bottom of the slope while standing across the fall line.

Edging
The adjustment of the angle between the skis running surface and the snow.

Fall Line
An imaginary line down the slope of hill. The route a ball would follow if allowed to roll freely down a slope.

Inside Ski
The ski closest to the center of a turn.

Ready Position
A well-balanced and relaxed stance on skis.

Side Step
A method of climbing the slope by keeping the skis across the fall line and using the edges.

Inward Star Turn
Step turn pivoting on the tips of skis.

Outward Star Turn
Step turn pivoting on the tails of skis.

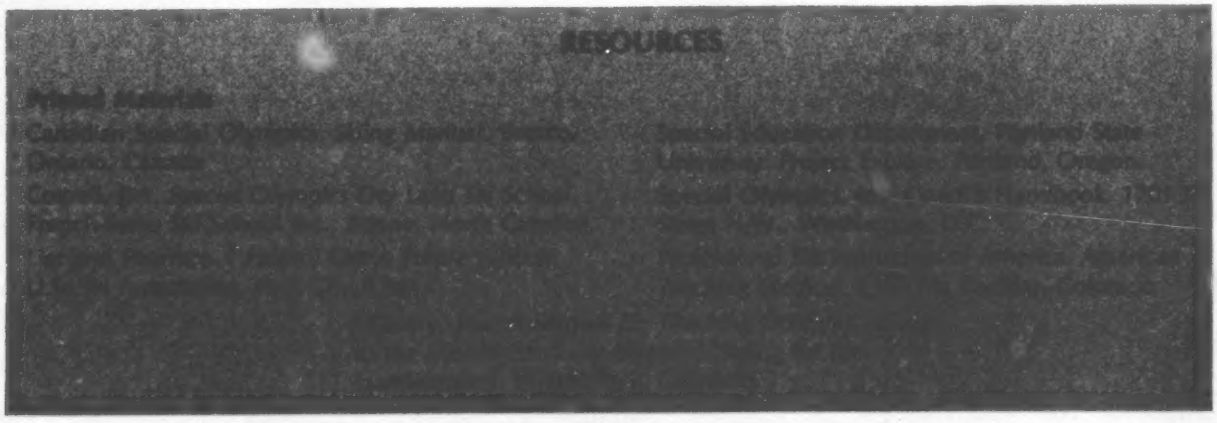
Track
The ability of the ski to go straight.

Tracks
Grooves in the snow that skis are placed in while skiing.

Tracksetting
The setting of long lasting, uniformly shaped tracks.

Uphill Ski
The ski closest to the top of the slope while standing across the fall line.

Weight Transfer
Shifting the weight from one ski to the other.



Instructions

The Skill Sheets have been designed to record each student's sports skills performance throughout the program. The vertical top boxes identify the specific tasks to be accomplished. Each box to the right of the Special Olympian's name includes a blank for the instructor to fill in the standard of success for each student based on his/her ability and the task to be performed. The standard, whether in distance, time or repetitions, reflects how well the student must execute the desired skill. You as the instructor are the one to determine each student's level of acceptable performance. Encourage your students to fill out the chart after each training session.

See example on page 41.

RECOVERY SKILL SHEET

NAME	Stands up with instructor's assistance	Stands up independently, but lacks control	Stands up independently under control	Stands up and assumes ski READY position (perpendicular to the fall line, if on a slope)	Demonstrates controlled falling		
Bill	6 % of time	4 % of time	2 % of time	2 % of time	3 % of time		
Sue	7 % of time	5 % of time	1 % of time	0 % of time	0 % of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

RECOVERY SKILL SHEET

NAME	Stands up with instructor's assistance	Stands up independently, but lacks control	Stands up independently under control	Stands up and assumes ski READY position (perpendicular to the fall line, if on a slope)	Demonstrates controlled falling		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

WALKING SKILL SHEET

NAME	Assumes READY position under control	Walks forward with instructor's assistance	Walks forward independently	Performs a shuffle slide			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			

TURNS SKILL SHEET

NAME	Makes attempt to change direction on skis	Executes an outward star turn with assistance	Executes an outward star turn to both left and right independently	Executes an inward star turn with assistance	Executes an inward star turn to both left and right independently		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

CLIMBING SKILL SHEET

NAME	Side steps on flat terrain	Side steps up a hill	Side steps up a hill without skis sliding sideways	Herringbones up a hill with assistance	Herringbones up a hill independently		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

SKIING PARTICIPATION SKILL SHEET

NAME	Understands objectives of ski lesson	Understands use of ski equipment	Understands and demonstrates safety and courtesy to others while skiing	Can identify slope or trail appropriate to their ability			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			

DOWNHILL RUN SKILL SHEET

NAME	Makes an attempt to ski downhill	Skis down a straight runout under control	Performs a straight wedge	Performs a wedge stop			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time			

TURNS SKILL SHEET

NAME	Performs a wedge turn with instructor's assistance	Performs a wedge turn independently	Performs a wedge turn to a stop	Performs a skate turn	Performs a skate turn to a stop		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

STRIDING SKILL SHEET

NAME	Performs a diagonal stride	Performs a diagonal stride with poles	Skis up an incline using a diagonal stride	Performs a diagonal stride with kick and glide	Performs a double poling stride		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

RACING SKILL SHEET

NAME	Can identify start and finish of a course	Participates in 100m cross country ski race	Participates in 1km cross country ski race	Participates in 3km cross country ski race	Knows how to pass and be passed during a race		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

SKIING PARTICIPATION SKILL SHEET

NAME	Understands universal trail signs and can choose trail appropriate to individual ability	Can ski with a group and doesn't need individual attention	Can ski easiest (green circle) trails safely	Can ski "more difficult" (blue square) trails safely	Can ski "expert" (black diamond) trails safely		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		
	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time	% of time		

DATE _____

Sports Skills
Assessment Record Sheet

NAME	PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: HAS PARTICIPATED	PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE: NEVER PARTICIPATED	LEVEL OF INDEPENDENCE: NEED PHYSICAL ASSISTANCE	LEVEL OF INDEPENDENCE: NEEDS DEMONSTRATION	LEVEL OF INDEPENDENCE: RECEIVES VERBAL ASSISTANCE	LEVEL OF INDEPENDENCE: RECEIVES NO HELP
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
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	1	2	1	2	3	4
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	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4
	1	2	1	2	3	4

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